



Maryland
Department of Agriculture

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Agricultural Fair Board & Animal Health

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry
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To: Fair & Show Leadership

From: Michael J. Odian, DVM
State Veterinarian

Harrison B. Palmer
Executive Secretary, Maryland Agricultural Fair Board

Date: February 27th, 2024

Re: Animal Health Fair & Show Policy & Procedure Updates


Thank you to all the organizations, fairs, and shows that have been in contact with the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board (MAFB) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Animal Health Team (AH) over the last several weeks regarding the December 20th notification of change in AH's policies & procedures. Your feedback and concerns have been pivotal in the development of this update and have helped steer the reconfiguration of these policies and procedures. Please review the following updates:

- MDA Animal Health Involvement:
 - **The MDA AH team will be present at every fair and show for barn walkthroughs** at a minimum and will be available to respond as needed to answer questions and provide guidance.
 - Most fairs and shows throughout the State already have well-established check-in processes, livestock committees, and/or experienced personnel to take lead in the event that MDA AH is not physically present during check-in, however MDA AH is always available when situations arise.
 - **MDA AH will still be available to directly aid in check-in for allotted time slots up to four hours.** If your fair/show will need check-in assistance from the AH team, please acknowledge so on your Notification of Exhibition (Due March 31st).
- Communication and Continuing Education:
 - MDA AH will record and publish the 2024 Fair and Show Entry Training that highlights what to look for on official documents, recognizing signs of disease in show animals, guidance on developing efficient and thorough check in procedures, best practices for rejection, and a review of required MDA AH forms.
 - MDA AH will host virtual office hours to allow time to ask questions and consult with fair/show personnel.
 - The first two virtual office hours will be held on March 5th and March 26th at 12:00 pm.

- These self-paced training & office hours will serve in lieu of the canceled March 4th training.
 - Links to participate in these virtual events will be available online and will be sent out to fair & show leadership.
- MDA Animal Health will hold an in-person workshop during Spring 2024 to reinforce the lessons learned in the online trainings.
- Additional Support
 - Each fair/show will be provided with a laminated contact-card with direct contact information for the MDA AH team and provide an outline of how to handle emergency situations if they arise.
 - MDA AH will always have a duty-vet on call that will be available to step in to provide situational guidance and/or serve as the final decision when rejecting an animal.

If you have further questions, comments, or concerns regarding the Maryland Department of Agriculture Animal Health team's involvement with your specific fair or show, please reach out to Dr. Davenport, Assistant State Veterinarian, at Janine.Davenport@maryland.gov or 410-841-5810. We look forward to promoting a more open channel of communication between the MDA AH team, Maryland Agricultural Fair Board, and each of the unique fairs and shows throughout the state that work hard to make it all possible.

Respectfully,


Michael J. Odian, DVM
State Veterinarian

Harrison B. Palmer
Harrison B. Palmer, Executive Secretary
Connie J. Palmer, Chair
Maryland Agricultural Fair Board